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AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

The attached sheet of Drawings includes changes to Figs. 2A and 2B. This sheet, which includes Figs. 2A and 2B, replaces the original sheet including Figs. 2A and 2B.

Attachment: One (1) Replacement Sheet.

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 16-31 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, Applicant amends the specification, the drawings, and Claims 16 and 18.

The Examiner acknowledged Applicant's election without traverse of Species I, Claims 16-19, 22, 24, 25, and 29-31 in the reply filed on November 29, 2007. Non-elected Claims 20, 21, 23, and 26-28 are dependent upon generic Claim 18. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner rejoin and allow Claims 20, 21, 23, and 26-28 when generic Claim 18 is allowed.

The specification was objected to for containing a minor informality. Applicant has amended the specification to correct the minor informality noted by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection.

Applicant has amended Figs. 2A and 2B to correct informalities contained therein. Particularly, Fig. 2A has been amended so as not to be designated as "PRIOR ART" and Fig. 2B has been amended so as to be designated as "PRIOR ART" because the originally filed specification discloses that "Fig. 2B is an explanatory diagram of the pitch of a known connection structure" and "Fig. 2A is an explanatory diagram for explaining a reduction of pitch of the internal conductor connection structure shown in Figs. 1A and 1B," i.e., a preferred embodiment of the present invention (see, for example, paragraph [0026] of Applicant's originally filed specification).

Claims 16-19, 22, 24, 25, 30, and 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Asai et al. (U.S. 6,534,723). Claim 18 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Arima et al. (U.S. 5,375,042). Claim 29 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Arima et al. in view of Fukuta et al. (U.S. 5,456,778). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections of claims 16-19, 22, 24, 25, and 29-31.

Claim 16 has been amended to recite:

An internal conductor connection structure comprising:

an insulator substrate;
line conductors disposed in the insulator substrate; and
at least two via conductors adjacent each other at a predetermined interval in the insulator substrate, at least one of the at least two via conductors including a continuous via conductor arranged to extend in a direction away from the other via conductor; wherein
the at least one of the at least two via conductors is connected to one of the line conductors through the continuous via conductor; and
the continuous via conductor has a dimension in a direction in which the line conductors extend that is greater than a dimension of the at least two via conductors in the direction in which the line conductors extend. (emphasis added)

Applicant's Claim 18 recites features that are similar to the features recited in Applicant's Claim 16, including the above-emphasized feature.

With the unique combination and arrangement of features recited in Applicant's Claims 16 and 18, including the feature of "the continuous via conductor has a dimension in a direction in which the line conductors extend that is greater than a dimension of the at least two via conductors in the direction in which the line conductors extend," Applicant has been able to provide an internal conductor connection structure capable of increasing a density of internal wiring in accordance with, for example, a reduction of the pitch between external terminals of an integrated circuit, as well as a multilayer substrate (see, for example, paragraph [0007] of Applicant's originally filed specification).

The Examiner alleged that Asai et al. teaches all of the features recited in Applicant's Claims 16 and 18, and that Arima et al. teaches all of the features recited in Applicant's Claim 18.

Applicant's Claim 16 has been amended to recite the feature of "the continuous via conductor has a dimension in a direction in which the line conductors extend that is greater than a dimension of the at least two via conductors in the direction in which the line conductors extend." Applicant's Claim 18 has been similarly amended. Support for this feature is found, for example, in paragraphs [0037]-[0039] and Figs. 1A and 2A of

Applicant's originally filed application.

In contrast to Applicant's Claims 16 and 18, each and every one of the via conductors disclosed and shown in Asai et al., including the via conductors shown in Fig. 8 of Asai et al., which the Examiner alleged correspond to the via conductors and the continuous via conductors recited in Applicant's Claims 16 and 18, have the same dimensions, and none of the via conductors of Asai et al. have a dimension in any direction that is greater than a dimension in the same direction of the remaining via conductors. Thus, Asai et al. certainly fails to teach or suggest the feature of "the continuous via conductor has a dimension in a direction in which the line conductors extend that is greater than a dimension of the at least two via conductors in the direction in which the line conductors extend" as recited in Applicant's Claim 16, and similarly in Applicant's Claim 18.

Similarly, each and every one of the via conductors disclosed and shown in Arima et al. have the same dimensions, and none of the via conductors of Arima et al. have a dimension in any direction that is greater than a dimension in the same direction of the remaining via conductors. Thus, Arima et al. certainly fails to teach or suggest the feature of "the continuous via conductor has a dimension in a direction in which the line conductors extend that is greater than a dimension of the at least two via conductors in the direction in which the line conductors extend" as recited in Applicant's Claim 16, and similarly in Applicant's Claim 18.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 16 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Asai et al., and the rejection of Claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Arima et al.

The Examiner relied upon Fukuta et al. to allegedly cure deficiencies of Arima et al. However, Fukuta et al. fails to teach or suggest the feature of "the continuous via conductor has a dimension in a direction in which the line conductors extend that is greater than a dimension of the at least two via conductors in the direction in which the

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line conductors extend” as recited in Applicant’s Claim 16, and similarly in Applicant’s Claim 18. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that Fukuta et al. fails to cure the deficiencies of Arima et al. described above.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that Asai et al., Arima et al., and Fukuta et al., applied alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the unique combination and arrangement of features recited in Applicant’s Claims 16 and 18.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 16 and 18 are allowable. Claims 17, 19, 22, 24, 25, and 29-31 depend upon Claims 16 and 18, and are therefore allowable for at least the reasons that Claim 16 and 18 are allowable. In addition, Applicant respectfully requests that non-elected Claims 20, 21, 23, and 26-28 be rejoined and allowed with generic Claim 18.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are solicited.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1353.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: May 16, 2008

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